

THE DEMING GRAPHIC

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY ESTABLISHED IN 1902
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Entered at the Postoffice as Second Class Matter. Subscription Rates, Two Dollars per Year; Six Months, One Dollar; Three Months, Fifty Cents. Subscriptions to Foreign Countries, Fifty Cents Extra

ADVERTISING RATES:

Fifteen cents a single column inch on monthly contracts with minimum of eight inches, single column; eighteen cents a single column inch for single insertions or less than four insertions; local column, ten cents a line each insertion; business locals, one cent a word; no local advertisements less than fifteen cents; no foreign advertisements less than twenty-five cents; card of thanks, fifty cents; resolutions of respect, twenty-five cents an inch

DEMING, NEW MEXICO, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1915

VANISHING RURAL POPULATION

How to keep the Americans on the farm, is the chief topic of discussion at the twenty-second International Irrigation Congress, which opened Tuesday at Stockton, California. W. E. Smyth declares that the drudgery, which is the lot of the farmer, and the loneliness, which is the lot of his wife, is the cause of the depletion of the rural population of America. He pointed out that the increase in the rural population was but four per cent while in the cities it was forty per cent during the period from 1900 to 1910; that the demand for the farm products had increased twenty-two per cent, and that the supply had increased but two per cent.

Intensive farming on small acreage under irrigation, is the answer to the problem, according to the speaker. Congressional action will help, he declared.

THE STAR OF VILLA WAXES

The Villa element in Mexico is rapidly disintegrating. Villa is falling back upon Chihuahua, leaving Torreon undefended. A decisive defeat before Chihuahua would mean a Waterloo for the bandit general. The suggestion that the Villa forces are preparing to break up the bandit bands, is probably true. If the Pan-American Congress, which meets Saturday, should decide on the recognizing of the Carranza government, which they probably will, means that the New Mexico border will probably undergo a period of quiet. In retaliation for such action, the Villa brigands probably will carry out a series of raids, much the same as the Carranza element has done on the Texas border.

ANOTHER CRISIS IN GERMAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS

Germany must disavow the action sinking the Arabic, or the United States will sever diplomatic relations. This is the gist of the information, which Secretary Lansing handed to Ambassador Bernstorff of Germany, for transmission to his government. The United States will not agree to arbitrate the principal involved, though, should Germany go on record as disavowing the act, the American government would be willing to submit a demand for damages to the tribunal.

Secretary Lansing made it plain that the story of the submarine commander, asserting that the actions of the Arabic indicated an attack, could not be accepted, as the state department has an abundance of proof that the submarine hid behind a freighter and attacked the Arabic without the possibility of the submarine being seen from the deck of the passenger steamer. So clear is the evidence, that it is understood Ambassador Bernstorff has made certain suggestions to his government showing that the submarine commander's story is not reasonable. It is hoped that the German government will see that its stand in the matter is untenable.

WE WILL HAVE GOOD ROADS

As the Graphic predicted, the road bonds carried by a safe majority, although the vote, except where the opposition was strong, was exceedingly light. It is fortunate that the bonds carried, and here is the rub, the money is expended judiciously. Everyone wants good roads and practically everyone is willing to pay for them. The money which has been spent on the roads in the past has been largely wasted. The squandering of the funds has not been due to dishonesty, but rather to lack of system and knowledge. No one has been responsible.

The road board system is only workable and efficient when it involves more than the ordinary civic pride, honesty, and unselfish industry. The money raised by the bonds is to be spent under this system. If the funds are spent wisely, it will be due to the virtues before enumerated, rather than any fixed responsibility, or hope of reward. Our only hope is that the present members of the road board are willing to do something for which they are not paid and for which they will get very little credit from the uninformed public. There will be a kick coming anyway.

The Graphic knows that the present road board will administer the road funds honestly and with the best interests of every part of Luna county in view. They are under nothing but moral obligations to see to it that the best results in road building are obtained. There is no reward but the consciousness of duty well done for them. The doubt in the minds of many, as expressed by the light vote and the evident opposition in some quarters, is due to the knowledge of past mistakes and an unflattering belief in the irresponsibility and inefficiency of the present road board system.

The matter of bonding country roads has received the careful attention of the department of agriculture. In a recent bulletin issued by the department, the difficulties in rural road construction and maintenance are set forth. An abstract of the bulletin appears on another page of this issue. An epitome of this abstract reads as follows:

Lack of accounting control; lack of interest in safeguarding funds by road boards; lack of expert information on road building and maintenance; lack of systematic handling of funds designed for the future use in maintenance of existing roads; failure to treat available local labor with consideration; failure to purchase materials in advance that involve tying up funds.

When the \$100,000 is spent, Luna county should have as fine a system of public roads as can be found anywhere in the country. The natural roads are good and passable practically every day in the year. To make boulevards of them it is only necessary to put on a little intelligent work that involves well known engineering principles.

The present plan seems to place the most important construction on the main highway of the county. A good road to Columbus and up the Mimbres river is a business necessity. To connect main arteries, it is planned to pay the farmers between them to grade and drag the roads in front of their farms. This will mean the expenditure of a large sum among the citizens of the county, where it will be appreciated. A road supervisor will be hired at a nominal salary and the services of a surveyor will be had when needed. There probably will be two main construction gangs. A bridge over the Mimbres river near the north end of the natural grove at the base of the Little Floridas, is proposed. This will give an outlet to the settlers north of the river in that section. There was some talk of shifting the Borderland route south of the river to the road that runs east past the old Hund farm.

In addition to the money raised by the county, there will soon be available an additional \$35,000 from the sale of the state road bonds. This, it is said, will be placed on the Borderland route, as the intention of the law authorizing the bonds was to provide good roads from one county sent to another.

The road board has some \$10,000 worth of road building machinery, which includes one large tractor engine and one small tractor engine. The first will be used largely for construction work and the second for maintenance work. There is an abundance of scrapers, drags, etc., for the work to be accomplished.

The citizens of Luna county will await this rather expensive experiment with a great deal of interest, and the outcome will determine largely whether or not the enthusiasm for good roads, involving the expenditure of large sums from the public monies, will be kept alive.

ODD BITS OF NEWS

Brownsville, Texas—General E. P. Safford, commander of the Carrancista troops in Matamoros, who is described as ignorant, untruthful and bearing all the earmarks of a confirmed outlaw.

El Paso, Texas—Edward Ledwith, joint consular agent of the Mexico Northwestern railway, the El Paso Milling Company, and the Madera Company, Ltd., and all other Pearson corporations, held for \$10,000 ransom by the Chavez brothers, Chihuahua bandits, since Sunday, was liberated Tuesday.

Washington, D. C.—General Carranza in his reply to the Pan-American conference, it was learned here Saturday, will agree to any international aspects of the Mexican situation but will decline to enter a conference on internal affairs.

Paris, France—William Sprague, famous war governor of Rhode Island and twice U. S. senator from that state, died at his residence here early Sunday afternoon, aged 84 years. His death was due to meningitis and the infirmities of years.

New York—The Fabre line steamship Santa Anna, which was on fire in mid-ocean, is safe and is proceeding under escort to the Azores, according to a wireless message to the local office today. The message was from the captain of the steamer. The ship had aboard 1,600 Italian reservists.

El Paso, Texas—Friends of John Lawton, an American cattle buyer, reported kidnapped by Colorado, followers of the late Orozco, who was captured near the town of Columbus, in the southern part of Luna county, are reported to be searching for the band below Hachita. They have with them the \$2,000 ransom demanded.

Washington, D. C.—Prospects for a favorable adjustment of the controversies between the United States and Germany depend entirely on the attitude which the Berlin foreign office will take toward the recommendations made Tuesday by Count von Bernstorff, the German ambassador, following his conference Monday with Secretary Lansing.

Details of the conference became known Tuesday, throwing light on the critical point that had been reached in the relations between the two countries. The Washington government was almost ready to sever diplomatic relations, but decided to delay taking any step until Germany could be furnished with evidence in its possession on the Arabic.

Clifton, Ariz.—Eight thousand men are now on a strike at the mines and plants of the Arizona Copper Company, the Detroit Copper Company, and the Shannon Copper Company. The strike includes miners, electricians, machinists and boiler makers. Last to walk out were the employees of the Arizona Copper Company smelter at Clifton who joined the strikers Monday afternoon. The strike follows demands of the Western Federation of Miners for increase in wages. The general managers declined to meet the union representatives and have refused to make a statement relative to the trouble. The Detroit and Arizona companies' mines and smelters at Morenci, the Detroit smelter at Clifton, and the Arizona company at Morenci are all closed.

Washington, D. C.—The next meeting of the Pan-American conference on the Mexican situation will be held in New York Saturday. Secretary Lansing announced Tuesday that he plans to hold the conference Wednesday and has changed on account of the illness of one of the Latin American delegates.

The replies of the Villa leaders and the note from General Carranza, will be taken under consideration at the meeting and a definite announcement of policy is expected.

It was learned Tuesday that the standing instructions to American consular agents to have Americans withdrawn from the danger zones in Mexico had been repeated on account of the lawlessness in northern Mexico, the many cases of kidnapping and the fact that the onward march of the Carranza forces make the north more of a battle ground than it has been. Officials denied that the warning was in any way an anticipation of the possible results of new political developments.

Brownsville, Tex.—The United States army in the lower Rio Grande valley Monday went in a very near approach to war footing. The cause was a carefully prepared attack on the camp of an army patrol near the Rio Grande by Mexicans Monday morning, the first deliberate blow at the American army here since the raids began, and which cost the life of one American soldier and an unknown number of Mexicans.

The fight began at dawn at an old corral where the patrol had camped and where the soldiers were in the act of getting breakfast. Ten soldiers entered the fight; seven were sent off in action at the end, and one was dead. Two Mexicans were seen to pitch forward on their faces during the fight, but their comrades removed all the Mexican killed and wounded.

Camps were chosen in view of reports that Mexicans might renew the attacks at any time and that the morning's outbreak might be a hint to cover attempted depredations at other points.

New York—The pro-German element of New York's financial world probably will be invited to participate if they signify that they desire such an invitation, in floating the billion-dollar credit loan which Great Britain and France hope to establish in this country.

The muted faction of this element, Wall Street heard, would be glad to have a chance to help another faction composed largely of middle western bankers with pro-German sympathies would bitterly oppose participation in raising funds for the use of the enemies of Germany, even though the United States will get the benefit of the spending of the money.

This was the big feature in the negotiations the early part of the week when the Anglo-French financial commission and the Wall Street bankers were endeavoring to adjust the foreign exchange situation.

Principally, the commission has met and conferred with only such bankers as are probably in their sympathies and interests. Not a banker with even the remotest connection with German financial interests has been bid to send a representative to the meetings at which scores of New York and out of town financiers have met the members of the commission and discussed the possible terms of the proposed loan.

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